



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

10/506,798

10/15/2004

Sumio Iijima

2004_1408A

6577

513

7590

11/17/2006

WENDEROTH, LIND & PONACK, L.L.P.

2033 K STREET N. W.

SUITE 800

WASHINGTON, DC 20006-1021

EXAMINER

MILLER, DANIEL H

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1775

DATE MAILED: 11/17/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/506,798	Applicant(s) IIJIMA ET AL.	
	Examiner Daniel Miller	Art Unit 1775	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 September 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 6-12 and 14-33 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 14-30 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 6-12 and 31-33 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 10/10/2006 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

2. Claims 6 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by (JP2001-064004).

3. (JP2001-064004) teaches a nanohorn aggregates (as depicted in figure 2 provided [0033]) or spherical core like bodies, which are placed in an ethanol carrier then dried (heated) to form a monolayer structure (bonded; see [0034-0037]). Since the carrier is ethanol (a liquid or aqueous solution) the shape is inherently variable.

Art Unit: 1775

4. Regarding the process limitation of heating the nanohorn aggregates to specific temperatures "even though product-by-process claims are limited by and defined by the process, determination of patentability is based on the product itself. The patentability of a product does not depend on its method of production. If the product in the product-by-process claim is the same as or obvious from a product of the prior art, the claim is unpatentable even though the prior product was made by a different process.", (In re Thorpe, 227 USPQ 964,966). Once the Examiner provides a rationale tending to show that the claimed product appears to be the same or similar to that of the prior art, although produced by a different process, the burden shifts to applicant to come forward with evidence establishing an unobvious different between the claimed product and the prior art product (In re Marosi, 710 F.2d 798, 802, 218 USPQ 289, 292 (Fed. Cir. 1983), MPEP 2113)

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Art Unit: 1775

6. Claims 6-10, 12, and 31-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over (JP 2001-036361) in view of (JP2001-064004).
7. Regarding claim 6, the JP' 361 reference teaches nanohorns in a paste (bonded and carried) (translation claim 1).
8. Regarding claims 7 and 8, JP' 361 teaches the nanohorns are fixed on a base material (substrate) (see paragraphs 0008-0010 and 0023 of translation).
9. Regarding claim 9 and 11, JP' 361 teaches the base material inherently has an arbitrary or variable shape.
10. Regarding claim 10 and 12, and 31-33, JP' 361 teaches the substrate (base material) is a boro-silicate glass (0012) and the carbon nanotubes project from the surface of the fixing material after being etched to expose them (0019 and 0023). However, the reference is silent as to the nanohorns being aggregates that are bonded in a carrier material.
11. (JP2001-064004) teaches a nanohorn aggregates (as depicted in figure 2 provided [0033]) or spherical core like bodies, which are placed in an ethanol carrier then dried (heated) to form a monolayer structure (bonded; see [0034-0037]). Since the carrier is ethanol (a liquid or aqueous solution) the shape is inherently variable. The carrier can be used to deposit the monolayer onto the fixing material of (JP 2001-036361) instead of loose nanohorns. The spherical particles can be useful as a monolayer on a probe such as STM or AFM or electrode source [0029], enhancing the electron emission capability or JP' 361 (see example in translation 361).

Art Unit: 1775

12. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify (JP 2001-036361) with the nanohorn aggregates of (JP2001-064004) in order to create spherical particles that are more useful as a monolayer on a probe such as STM or AFM or electrode source.

13. Regarding the process limitation of heating the nanohorn aggregates to specific temperatures "even though product-by-process claims are limited by and defined by the process, determination of patentability is based on the product itself. The patentability of a product does not depend on its method of production. If the product in the product-by-process claim is the same as or obvious from a product of the prior art, the claim is unpatentable even though the prior product was made by a different process.", (In re Thorpe, 227 USPQ 964,966). Once the Examiner provides a rationale tending to show that the claimed product appears to be the same or similar to that of the prior art, although produced by a different process, the burden shifts to applicant to come forward with evidence establishing an unobvious difference between the claimed product and the prior art product (In re Marosi, 710 F.2d 798, 802, 218 USPQ 289, 292 (Fed. Cir. 1983), MPEP 2113)

Response to Arguments

14. Applicant's arguments filed 9/11/2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The examiner does not agree that merely because something is

Art Unit: 1775

separable by ultrasonic grinding that they are not chemically bonded. It is not clear from applicant's specification what is meant by the phrase "mutually *carried*". Finally, the process limitation added to the previous claims are not indicative of patentability of the product claimed wherein the product is otherwise taught. Furthermore, in applicant's second example, the material is heated to 120-150 C which is less than that of the instantly applied reference. It is not clear how the temperature affects the structure of the material. Is the example of the instant specification considered "mutually carried"? If so, how does the temperature differ from that of the prior art? Therefore, the process limitations added via amendment have created no patentable distinction between the current claimed invention and the prior art.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Daniel Miller whose telephone number is (571) 272-1534. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F/Th.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jennifer McNeil can be reached on (571) 272-1540. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 1775

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Daniel Miller



JENNIFER MCNEIL
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER

11/13/00